

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### IRON-A-WAY Inc

#### Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

#### Iron-A-Way's Growth Strategies Gain Steam With Iso

##### Client Profile:

Iron-A-Way is a manufacturer of built-in ironing centers for customers in the residential, hotel, and condominium markets, as well as for the military and correctional institutions. The company, located in Morton, Illinois, exports its product to international markets with the help of less than 50 employees.

##### Situation:

Iron-A-Way conceived a strategic vision of taking the company to a new level in order to meet future manufacturing needs and provide evidence of a higher quality standard. To meet its goals, the company needed to improve many of its business practices, including its product documentation, documented quality system, and technology to give architects electronic access to product specifications. The company enlisted the help of the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for help with a number of strategic initiatives.

##### Solution:

IMEC immediately set Iron-A-Way on the path to ISO registration. The company participated in an ISO/QS 9000 Preparation Network, earned registration, and upgraded its quality systems to the ISO 9000:2000 standard. To address other areas of concern, IMEC completed basic piece part and assembly drawings of all Iron-A-Way's products and assisted in converting them to electronic (AutoCAD) format, allowing the product to be integrated into the company's web site. IMEC also completed the three-part CSI specs. Now, when architects prepare construction drawings, they can drag and drop Iron-A-Way CAD drawings and download the required CSI specs, saving them time and giving Iron-A-Way a huge advantage over the competition.

##### Results:

Achieved ISO/QS 9000 certification.

Saved nearly \$500,000.

Enabled on-line requests for product specs from architects throughout the country.

Anticipating substantial increase in sales revenues.

##### Testimonial:

[www.mep.nist.gov](http://www.mep.nist.gov)



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"Over the years, we have developed a great relationship with the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center. Its specialists have come to understand the critical aspects of our business and helped us meet several of our strategic goals. We rarely initiate a project or an improvement without first bringing in IMEC to determine in what ways they may be able to assist us."

Reginald Smidt, President